

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NATO, PFOR, UR, XA

SUBJECT: PODGORNYY VISIT TO AFRICA
U
REF: USNATO 1674 (NOTAL)

FOLLOWING ANALYSIS PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO SYG LUNS'
REQUEST (REFTEL).

1. PRESIDENT PODGORNYY'S AFRICAN TRIP DEMONSTRATED THE
USSR'S CONTINUING DETERMINATION TO EXPLOIT RACIAL POLARI-
ZATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA FOR SOVIET ADVANTAGE. HIS HARD
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LINE BACKING FOR INTENSIFICATION OF THE MILITARY STRUGGLE
OFFERS LITTLE ENCOURAGEMENT FOR EXPECTING THAT MOSCOW
WILL ENCOURAGE POLITICAL SETTLEMENT EFFORTS OR MODERATE ITS
SUPPORT OF MAXIMUM BLACK AFRICAN DEMANDS.

2. PODGORNYY OCCASIONALLY ACKNOWLEDGED THE DESIRABILITY
OF A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE RHODESIAN, NAMIBIAN AND

SOUTH AFRICAN PROBLEMS. HE ALSO AVOIDED ANY DIRECT CRITICISM OF NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD A SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA EVEN UNDER ANGLO-AMERICAN AUSPICES. BUT THE THRUST OF HIS EMPHASIS WAS ON FULL SUPPORT OF INTENSIFIED MILITARY PRESSURE ON THE WHITE REGIMES. AND MEETINGS WITH LIBERATION LEADERS, NKOMO, NUJOMA, AND TAMBO IN LUSAKA

UNDERScoreD MOSCOW'S BACKING FOR THE GUERRILLA CAUSE THROUGHOUT THE AREA. PODGORNy EMPHASIZED SOVIET SUPPORT FOR THE RHODESIAN PATRIOTIC FRONT, BUT DID NOT MEET WITH ROBERT MUGABE. SIGNATURE OF THE SOVIET-MOZAMBIQUE FRIENDSHIP TREATY IN MAPUTO, MEANWHILE, UNDERScoreD A WILLINGNESS TO EXTEND THE USSR'S SUPER-POWER PROTECTOR ROLE TO THAT COUNTRY.

3. NEVERTHELESS, PODGORNy ALSO DEMONSTRATED A WARINESS ABOUT MOVING TOO BOLDLY. ALTHOUGH HE READILY IMPLIED SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO ARM THE BLACK FORCES, HIS REPEATED ASSERTION THAT THE AFRICANS THEMSELVES MUST BEAR THE BURDEN OF LIBERATING PEOPLES STILL SUBJECT TO WHITE RULE SEEMED CALCULATED TO RESPOND TO THE UNEASE OF FRONT-LINE AFRICAN STATES REGARDING AN INTRUSIVE SOVIET-CUBAN ROLE. THE DEFENSE ASPECTS OF THE MOZAMBIQUE TREATY CAREFULLY AVOIDED BINDING MOSCOW TO ANY COURSE OF ACTION BEYOND CONSULTATIONS IN THE EVENT OF A MILITARY THREAT TO THAT COUNTRY.

4. ASIDE FROM THE SIGNATURE OF THE MOZAMBIQUE FRIENDSHIP TREATY, THE TRIP APPARENTLY RESULTED IN SOME HEIGHTENED CONFIDENTIAL

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DEGREE OF SOVIET COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE WEAPONS TO THE RHODESIAN PATRIOTIC FRONT. THE SOVIETS PROBABLY VIEW IT AS AN IMPORTANT STEP TOWARD EXPANDING THEIR ROLE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. PODGORNy RECEIVED AN INCREASINGLY WARM RECEPTION AS HE MOVED FROM TANZANIA THROUGH ZAMBIA TO MOZAMBIQUE. AND TANZANIAN AND ZAMBIAN SIGNATURES ON SEVERAL NEW BILATERAL AGREEMENTS WILL ENCOURAGE MOSCOW TO BELIEVE THERE IS GREATER ACCEPTANCE BY THOSE STATES OF A SOVIET ROLE IN THE REGION. ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPECIAL TREATY RELATIONSHIP WITH MOZAMBIQUE, MEANWHILE, CLEARLY MARKS A SOVIET GAIN THERE AT THE EXPENSE OF THE CHINESE, WHOSE INFLUENCE HAS BEEN STEADILY DECLINING IN ANY CASE.

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